

Text: Luke 1:46-55

Theme: Magnifying Mary

Grace, mercy and peace be to you from God our Father and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

My dear beloved flock, the text for our meditation this morning is the Gospel according to St. Luke the first chapter, verses forty-six through fifty-five.

Boys and girls, how are you doing today? Good? Excellent! Do you like to sing and make music? I am sure that you have lots of songs that you like to sing. In our text for today, we hear the song of Mary, often called the Magnificat, a fancy word meaning to magnify or glorify. What does Mary's song tell us about Jesus and why we celebrate Mary today? Ponder this as we hear the rest of the sermon. You may go back to your seats and those who love you.

Why celebrate and honor Mary?

Mary, Mary, what is the deal about Mary? Why is it important to celebrate her feast day today? Mary appears in all of the Creeds of the Church. In the Second Article, we confess that Jesus Christ for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary.

At first glance, Mary is a nobody. She is a poor unmarried woman from a small backwater town. She herself has no significance in history or anything of note. In fact, if people find out that she is pregnant, she may well be stoned to death for adultery under Jewish Law. Yet, Elizabeth just before our text for today, calls Mary the blessed mother of our Lord, that through her, all generations will call her blessed. Mary will be the first to admit her sins, the fact that she too needs a Savior.

That she, like us, has sinned in thought, word, and deed. That is why her very soul rejoices. It rejoices in the actions of God, that He has looked upon her lowly estate and raised her up in His grace and mercy to be the one to bear the Savior of the world. The Roman Catholic Church takes this exultation to super heights. They honor her as a Co-Redemptrix. They place her on a pedestal alongside Jesus Christ. They pray to her, figuring that Jesus will have to listen to her, after all if you do not listen to your mom what happens? Mom is unhappy and makes your life unhappy in exchange. Catholics take this thinking and apply it to Mary. Do we go so far? Is Mary even worthy of praise and honor?

Mary is worthy of honor and praise. However, it is not because she is a Co-Redemptrix in any way. Rather, it is because of the actions of God working through her. God has blessed her and has done great things for her. God has blessed her to be the Theotokos, the God-bearer. That through Mary, God is keeping His promises to Abraham and to his offspring forever. The promise that through the line of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob shall all the nations of the world be blessed.

Points us to Son

That is why we celebrate Mary today, because she as the blessed Virgin Mary points us to the Son that she bore. Jesus, Son of God and Son of Mary. Mary's Son and Mary's Savior. Mary's song magnifies the Savior who loves the whole world with a love that makes creation whole. A love that means that God enters into His creation, taking on human flesh to judge and to save. God's saving judgment is for all of us. God's Law brings down the prideful and exalts the lowly. He brings us down from the pride that fills us with ourselves until we can't see either God or neighbor. All of those times when we seek to exult ourselves above others thinking that we are so much better than them. The Gospel brings us up from the shame that distorts our worldview and convinces us that no one — not even God — could love us. God does love you. So much that He cares for you and sent His Son to be born of Mary. Mary, the mother of the Messiah has experienced God's blessing. She got to

bear the Savior, feel Him kick within the womb, nurse at her breast, and raise Him. Then came the pain and the sorrow, but what a privilege! Who would need more than that - to be involved in the story of mankind's salvation, and to know it, and to know your part! Her blessing, like ours, is a cross-shaped blessing, That God blesses us in Jesus by His perfect life on our behalf, perfectly keeping the Law of God. We are blessed by Jesus going to the cross, to suffer, bleed and die, that we may have eternal blessings forever in Heaven. Though Mary's Son, Jesus, God takes us as humble estate sinners and exalts us to all the riches of heaven and reconciles us to Himself forever.

Honor Mary along with all the Saints

This is why we too as Lutherans honor Mary. Not because she is somehow equal to Christ, but rather because of the grace God has shown to her, that in spite of her sins, God has made use of her in His plan of Salvation. As the Confessions state regarding the worship of the saints, "It is truly worthwhile to hear of these things and to see some examples of mercy." We can find no great mercy, than the blessed Mother of our Lord, who bore us Jesus, the Savior of the World, for us men and for our salvation that we might have the forgiveness of all of our sins and salvation unto life everlasting.

May the Peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard and keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.